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## THE THIRTEENTH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND PREPARATORY SCHOOLS OF THE MIDDLE STATES AND MARY- LAND.

THE Convention was held this year in the State Normal and Model Schools in Trenton, New Jersey, Friday and Saturday, December 1, 2. The meeting was of unusual importance inasmuch as the association took action which may lead to the establishment of a uniform system of college entrance examinations, at least for the territory represented by the association. It rests now with the colleges to take the initiative, assured of the approval and coöperation of the association and, if one may judge by the representations made on behalf of certain of the universities, a serious effort is about to be made to effect a radical reform in the relations existing between colleges and preparatory schools.

In view of the action that resulted therefrom the most important event of the meeting was the discussion: Entrance Requirements with a Common Board of Examiners, which constituted the program for the Friday afternoon session.

The discussion was opened by Professor Nicholas Murray Butler, of Columbia University, to whom belongs the credit of suggesting a definite proposal which led to the action taken by the association.

The difficulties that attended the relations between secondary schools and colleges, Doctor Butler maintained, grew out of what he called our educational atomism. Each institution consulted first what it believed to be its own peculiar interests and then only, as time and opportunity served, did it cast a sympathetic glance towards the interests of education in general.

In opposition to this selfish view of the functions and duties of a college, Doctor Butler upheld the view that regards every educational body as a public institution. The state gave it a right to exist, fostered it and had a claim on it which might not be

disregarded. The argument that the public was best served in the long run by a system of unrestricted competition, might have had weight a hundred or even fifty years ago, but today the principle was bad in economics, bad in morals, and bad in education. The injury that such a system worked was widespread and evident, parents and pupils found fault with it, the colleges complained of it. This period of unrest was bound to usher in a new era of intellectual coöperation that would increase many fold the effectiveness of our existing machinery.

The most direct and the most important application of this principle was to be found in the relations between the colleges and the secondary schools, relations which in turn all centered about the problem of college entrance. On the Atlantic seaboard, where the largest colleges with a truly national constituency have their homes, was felt the full force of the atomic system of college administration. Requirements for admission were not only as diverse as the colleges were numerous, but more so; for some had two systems in operation at one and the same time. Of the 76 colleges in the north Atlantic states having courses leading to the A.B. degree, only 40 made use of the uniform English requirements for admission. Latin was demanded by 70 of the 76, Greek by 59, one modern language by 22, plane geometry by 67, solid geometry by 5, physics by 12 and history other than that of the United States by 64. Only 17 of these colleges require Latin, Greek, and one modern language for admission to the bachelor of arts course, and in 13 only was a choice between Greek and a modern language permitted.

Still greater was the difference in the topics specified under the several subjects. These differences were almost infinite in number and were constantly changing. They existed because of the wish of some one college teacher or because of the use of some particular text-book. Personal preferences elevated thus into principles which controlled public policy became a public nuisance and a public danger. For the removal of these evils there was need not alone of uniform requirements for admission, but of a uniform administration of these requirements. It was not necessary that all colleges should agree to require one and

the same set of subjects for admission, but when a subject was required, it should always and everywhere mean the same set of topics, and be always and everywhere administered in the same way. Caesar, for example, would mean the same amount of Caesar, and not four books here, three books somewhere else, and two books at a third place. The administration of such a uniform series of requirements was easy if the requirements were stated in terms of units as was now done by Harvard College, and was recommended in the recent admirable report of the National Educational Association's Committee on college entrance requirements.

Such a uniform series of college entrance requirements to be administered by a joint board of examiners was not a new proposal. It was made to the Association of Colleges in New England in November 1894, by President Eliot, and repeated by him before the New York Schoolmasters' Association on February 8, 1896. On December 22, 1893, Dr. Butler had introduced a resolution looking to the same end at a meeting of the faculty of Columbia College.

It was a long step forward in college administration when admission to its course of instruction was taken out of the hands of the several heads of departments, each acting singly on the candidate's qualifications in one subject, and made an institutional matter, cared for and determined by a committee on admission. The next step was to extend this principle to a group of colleges acting together. It was necessary to make a beginning in this direction, and to this end Dr. Butler offered the following definite proposals :

1. That this association shall itself and at this meeting take the initiative in urging the establishment of a Joint College Admission Examination Board for the territory represented here.

2. That each college in the middle states and Maryland having a freshman class of fifty or more shall be asked to unite in establishing such a board, and to send one representative thereto.

3. That this association, or, if preferable, the secondary schools which are members, shall elect annually five representatives of the secondary schools to serve on such a board.

4. That the necessary expenses of such a board shall be defrayed from

the proceeds of an examination fee of not less than \$5, to be paid by every candidate for the certificate to be issued by such board.

5. That this board shall have two functions: (1) a temporary function, to bring about, as rapidly as may be, an agreement upon a uniform statement as to each subject required by two or more colleges for admission; (2) a permanent function, to prepare or to cause to be prepared, an annual series of college admission examination papers; to hold examinations in June of each year at convenient points throughout the middle states and Maryland; and to issue certificates based upon the results of such examinations.

6. That the colleges which are members of this association be formally asked to accept these certificates, so far as they go, in place of the existing separate admission examinations.

7. That this board should establish the principle of accepting no paper as an examination test for college admission, which has not been passed upon both by a representative of the colleges and by a representative of the secondary schools, and the principle of rejecting no answer paper save by the concurrent judgment of not less than two examiners.

8. That the actual examiners under the jurisdiction of this board should include secondary-school teachers as well as college teachers.

The effect of such a plan, if adopted, would be to usher in a new educational era in this section of the country.

Finally, Dr. Butler argued, there were no practical difficulties in the carrying out of such a plan. Oxford and Cambridge had long done something like it. Such coöperation between the colleges would help them greatly. It would increase the attendance, and would hasten the day when one function of this proposed board would be to supervise the inspection and accrediting of secondary schools, to the end that their graduates might be accepted at the coöperating colleges, or at others which chose to accept the credentials issued by such a board, without a special formal admission examination.

Dr. Butler was followed by Principal Gregory, of Long Branch, N. J., who discussed the question from the point of view of the public high school. There was first to be considered the question of the relation of the city high school to that of the small town. In New Jersey more than half the pupils were educated in the small high school, and of this number few were preparing for college. The question of the relation of these small schools to the educational system was involved in the

larger question of the relation of the high school to the college. If uniformity of entrance examination meant simply that all colleges require the same amount of Latin and Greek, uniformity would not greatly benefit the United States. Uniformity in the report of the National Committee on college entrance requirements was of a different order. The speaker cited resolution 12:

*Resolved*, That we recommend that any piece of work comprehended within the studies included in this report that has covered at least one year of four periods a week, in a well-equipped secondary school, under competent instruction, should be considered worthy to count toward admission to college.

And resolution 6:

*Resolved*, That, while the committee recognizes as suitable for recommendation by the colleges for admission, the several studies enumerated in this report, and while it also recognizes the principle of large liberty to the students in secondary schools, it does not believe in unlimited election, but especially emphasizes the importance of a certain number of constants in all secondary schools, and in all requirements for admission to college.

*Resolved*, That the committee recommends that the number of constants be recognized in the following proportion, namely: four units in foreign languages (no language accepted in less than two units), two units in mathematics, two in English, one in history, and one in science.

This was uniformity that left scope for individuality, and such a system of uniform requirements was the only one that the high schools could accept.

Culture, citizenship, and vocation might be said to be the aim of the high school. According to one view, the high school formed a link between the common school and the college, but it was only a partial view; according to another view it is a final stage; in many high schools there was no preparatory department. The public high school could not come to the college, and the speaker declared that the colleges would seem to be responsible for the deplorable lack of articulation.

Following Principal Gregory, President Patton opened the general discussion of the question in a somewhat ironical vein. Inasmuch as he had nothing to say he had consented to speak before his colleagues took the floor. He had long felt that there was something wrong in the relation between high school and

college, but had not been able to decide where the trouble lay. At one time, too, he had been disposed to think there was some virtue in entrance requirements, but since listening to the paper of Principal Gregory he had become convinced that all the colleges were wrong.

If the plans proposed were adopted, the speaker continued, the entire curriculum and entrance requirements of the colleges would have to be adjusted to one another. At Princeton it would involve the breaking up of their courses and the probable abandonment of certain courses which the Princeton faculty regarded as important. It would mean that the courses would become entirely elective and that Latin and Greek would no longer be required for the bachelor of arts degree. We might be coming to such a state of things, but the speaker gave expression to his conviction that the new order would not find immediate favor in Princeton. Referring to what Dr. Butler had said of the responsibility which the university owed to the state, President Patton declared that in their state they were true Americans and believed without qualification in the separation of church and state and college and state.

The next speaker, President Eliot, while expressing himself as entertained by President Patton's remarks, pointed out that the criticisms urged against Dr. Butler's plan were based upon a misunderstanding of his proposition. For Dr. Butler had not proposed a system of state supervision, and if the plan which Dr. Butler urged were to be put into operation the several colleges would still be free to decide for themselves what they would accept. The plan would require, President Eliot thought, a board of not less than fifteen members and the organization of the system would take several years' work. Then the board would have to get another set of men to prepare the examination papers. For each set the work of three men would be needed. That would require the services of, say, forty-five men. Then the reading of answer papers would demand the services of a very considerable number of examiners, say seventy, eighty, or a hundred. Other colleges would have to be drawn on for that service, and that would be a great advantage of the system. This would be real

coöperation, and coöperation of the best kind. It would not be necessary to organize a board for the United States, though President Eliot believed he could pick out six universities, from Maine westward, to form such a board for the United States. There were numerous facilities for the furtherance of such work, among which the speaker reckoned of high value the special associations which are accustomed to hold regular meetings or conferences. Through these meetings the various specialists become acquainted and coöperation is thus made easy.

Referring to Principal Gregory's paper, President Eliot expressed his appreciation of some of the difficulties inherent in the organization of the high school, and stated that the new requirements of Harvard and the Lawrence Scientific School were framed to meet just the objections raised in Mr. Gregory's paper. But the high school, the speaker insisted, must give as substantial work in the new subjects as in the old. There were other fundamental differences, too, between the high schools and the private and endowed schools which must be remedied if the high schools were to receive from the colleges the recognition demanded. In the first place, it was impossible for a school with one teacher for forty-five pupils to equal a school with one teacher for twenty pupils. In the second place, the high school must not only demand the same effort of the pupil, but must have the same means of teaching. This would call for a great advance in the material equipment of the high schools.

Uniform requirements on paper, President Eliot continued, we have made large progress in; but uniformity in the statement on paper was useless without uniformity in enforcement. For this a board was indispensable. The certificate system prevented coöperation. In New England only Harvard, Bowdoin, and Yale insisted on entrance examinations. All the rest had the certificate system, and the system existed without any provision for inspection. Every five years Harvard published a list of all schools, public and private, and endowed, which send students to Harvard. Other institutions, on the basis of this list, accept certificates of these schools. This was not coöperation. A



similar statement was true with regard to the list of approved schools published in the catalogue of the University of Michigan. The California method came the nearest to a combination of the certificate system with supervision, but the inspection was inadequate, for each school was visited only once in three years, by one professor. In short, the certificate system lacked every element of coöperation, and of reality.

President Low next spoke of some of the difficulties under which the New York schools labored in preparing for college. Columbia College accepted certificates from other colleges, but did not accept the certificates of schools. The speaker assured his audience that Columbia might be counted on to further all efforts to secure coöperation. We want, he said, to see the result reached, and we will do our best to reach it.

President Warfield, of Lafayette College, followed in a brief address, in which he expressed sympathy with the attitude of Principal Gregory, and pleaded that the test of scholarship which the examination system applied was not the only consideration in admitting students to college. There were institutions, the speaker maintained, which were able to receive men of advanced years and of inadequate preparation, and after a four years' course to send them out into honorable careers, and the speaker deprecated any plan which would shut out the colleges from this field of activity.

In a brief reply President Eliot reiterated the statement that the scheme proposed contemplated the application merely of an educational test, and would deprive no institution of the right to apply other criteria in determining what students they should admit.

A committee was finally chosen to recommend at the Saturday session such action as they should deem desirable. The resolution submitted was, however, withdrawn in favor of a substitute, presented by Dr. Butler, as the association desired to make it possible, in case the colleges took the initiative, to coöperate with the latter in some definite plan of action, before the next annual meeting.

The resolution introduced by Dr. Butler and passed by the convention was as follows:

*Resolved*, That this association urges the early establishment of a joint college admission examination board, composed of representatives of colleges and secondary schools in the middle states and Maryland, which shall (1) endeavor to bring about as rapidly as possible an agreement upon a uniform statement as to each subject required by two or more colleges for admission ; (2) hold or cause to be held, at convenient points, in June of each year, a series of college admission examinations, with uniform tests on each subject, and issue certificates based upon the results of such examinations.

*Resolved*, That in case such a board be established before the next meeting of this association, the executive committee be empowered to designate the representatives of secondary schools to serve upon such boards until December 1900.

*Resolved*, That the several colleges in the middle states and Maryland be requested by this association to accept the certificates issued by such joint college examination, so far as they go, in lieu of their own separate admission examinations.

*Resolved*, That these resolutions be printed and the secretary instructed to forward a copy to the president or principal of each institution on the membership roll of this association.

The Saturday session was opened with the discussion : "The Transition from School to College." In an able paper which was listened to with evident appreciation, Dean LeB. R. Briggs, of Harvard University, discussed the question, chiefly from its moral side. His experience, he said, was limited to men's colleges, and he would be compelled, therefore, to leave women's colleges out of the discussion.

College life, said Professor Briggs, was the supreme privilege of youth. Rich men's sons might take it carelessly, as something to enjoy unearned, like their own daily bread ; yet the true title to it was the title earned in college, day by day.

The transition from school to college was almost coincident with the transition from youth to manhood—often a time when the physical being is excitable and ill-controlled. Sensitive to his own importance, just beginning to know his own power for good and evil, the youth was shot into new and exciting surroundings—out of a discipline that drove and held him with whip and rein, into a discipline that trusted him to see the road and to travel in it.

To prepare a boy to pass his college examinations required

skill, but was easy, continued the speaker. The best school was the school that best prepared him for this struggle; not the school that guarded him most sternly, or most tenderly, nor the school that guarded him not at all, but the school that steadily increased his responsibility, and as steadily strengthened him to meet it; the best college was the college that best developed the man.

After pointing out that the larger schools and academies were constantly threatened with all the forms of vice known to the college, and that many a boy acquired in school habits for which his parents would later hold the college responsible, Professor Briggs proceeded to say, that in the transition from school to college continuity of the best influence, mental and moral, was the thing most needful. The one continuity at present was often neither mental nor moral, but athletic. An athlete was watched at school as an athlete; entered college as an athlete, and if he was a good athlete and took decent care of his body, he continued his college course as an athlete. While the management of college athletics had been bad and was still bad, it was nevertheless true that for many a boy no better bridge of the gap between school and college had yet been found than the bridge afforded by athletics. It was his firm belief, Professor Briggs declared, that football tides many a freshman over a great danger by keeping him healthily employed. It supplied what President Eliot had called "a new and effective motive for resisting all sins which weaken or corrupt the body."

As some system of gradually increased responsibility was best in theory, so it had proved good in practice. Such a system when provided by the school should be met half way by the system of friendly supervision at college. This system as it existed in Harvard was materially strengthened and reënforced by the voluntary committees of the Juniors and Seniors.

To see all students of all colleges and all boys of all schools believing and having the right to believe, that their teachers are their friends, to see the educated public recognize the truth, that school and college should help each other in lifting our youth to the high ground of character, this, Professor Briggs

declared, was the ideal of education. Toward this ideal we were moving, and if we even came so near it as to see it always, we should cease to dread the transition from school to college.

President Waters, of Wells College, the next speaker, discussed the question in relation both to the school and the college. That the college was not always successful in awakening the man to make the most of himself was admitted. The fault was to be found partly in the schools and partly in the college. Among other things which he criticised the speaker referred to the influence of the so-called information courses. They tended to reduce to their level the teaching of other courses. Another was the almost exclusive employment of women as teachers in the schools, concerning which some noteworthy statistics were quoted.

In the colleges there was often a lack of responsibility, which led to unfortunate results. The university rarely stood *in terrorem* over the college, as does the college over the school.

Again some colleges developed a too highly individualized character. These were the live institutions. Women's colleges in particular were taking on a most decidedly individual character, which in the future must be reckoned with. Where boys and girls are trained together in preparation for college, this meant loss for the former as well as the latter, if the too individual characteristics of the women's colleges were insisted upon.

President Waters thought that the Association of Collegiate Alumnae exercised a most beneficial influence upon the women's colleges and regretted that there was no similar organization among the graduates of men's colleges.

The other discussions on the program were of a highly interesting character, but do not appeal primarily to the teachers of secondary schools.

The association was the recipient of unstinted hospitality. Addresses of welcome were made by His Excellency, Foster M. Voorhees, Governor of New Jersey and by the Hon. F. O. Briggs, Mayor of Trenton, and on Friday the delegates were hospitably entertained at luncheon by the courtesy of the State Board of Education.

The following is a list of the officers for the ensuing year.

President—Dr. John G. Wight, Principal of the Girls' High School of New York.

Vice Presidents—President T. H. Lewis, Western Maryland College, Westminster, Md.; President H. T. Spanger, Ursinus College, Collegeville, Pa.; President M. Woolsey Stryker, Hamilton College, Clinton, N. Y.; Principal A. H. Berlin, Wilmington (Del.) High School; Principal Thomas W. Sidwell, Friends Select School, Washington, D. C.; Principal James M. Green, New Jersey State Normal and Model Schools, Trenton, N. J.

Secretary—Dr. Merrick Whitcomb, University of Pennsylvania.

Treasurer—Prof. John B. Kieffer, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pa.

Executive Committee—The President, Secretary, and Treasurer *ex officio* and President Isaac Sharpless, of Haverford (Pa.) College, Principal Randall Spaulding, Montclair (N. J.) High School and Professor Dana C. Monro, University of Pennsylvania.

F. H. HOWARD

COLGATE ACADEMY  
Hamilton, N. Y.